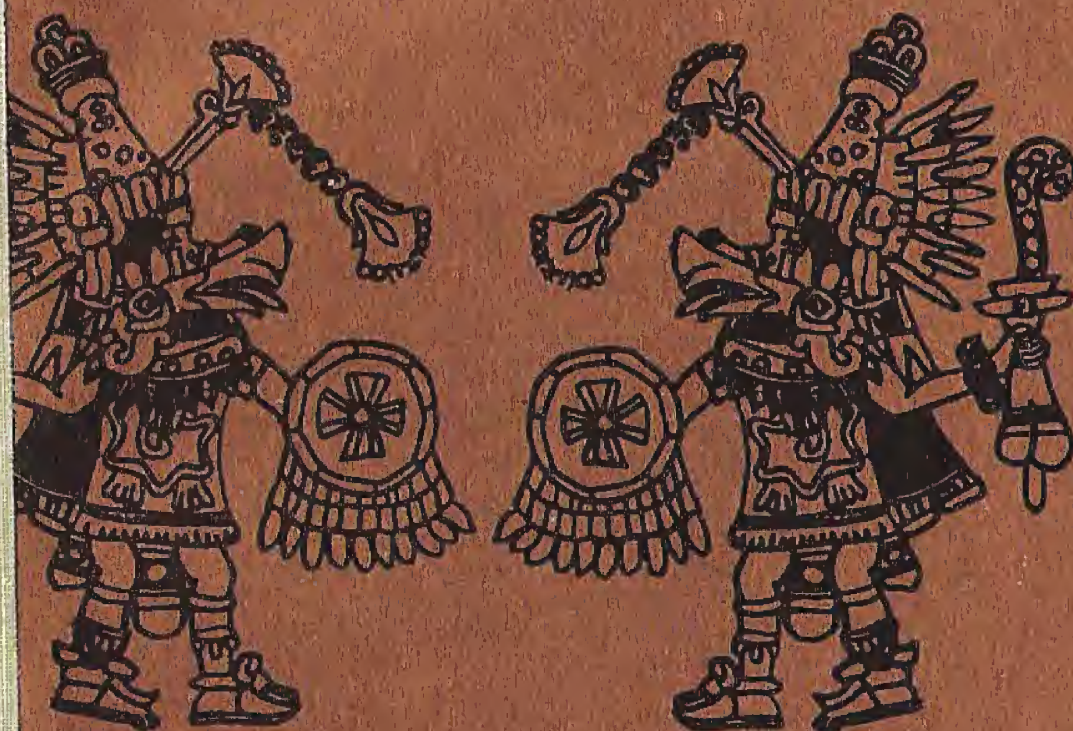


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LA RAZA!



Is It A Chicano Party? or Chicano Studies?

by Roger Alvarado • Antonio Camejo
Rudolfo "Corky" Gonzales • Isabel
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Manganilla • Antonio Mondragón
Armando Valdez.

Why a Chicano Party?

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On Nov. 13-14, 1969, a symposium on Chicano liberation was held at California State College, Hayward. Sponsored by the college's La Raza organization, the symposium was attended by 500 students, most of whom were Chicanos.

On the second evening of the symposium, a panel discussion on the formation of a Chicano political party took place. A transcript of that discussion follows, abridged and edited in the interests of readability (elimination of repetitions, etc.).

Participants in the discussion were:

Armando Valdez (Chairman) - Director of La Causa, an Oakland, Calif., Chicano distribution center.

Roger Alvarado - Activist and leader in the San Francisco State student strike led by the Third World Liberation Front in 1968-69. He is also active in the defense of Los Siete de la Raza, seven San Francisco Latinos fighting frame-up charges for their political ideas and work in the community.

Aaron Manganilla - Formerly a counselor in the College Readiness Program at the College of San Mateo, Calif., he is presently helping to organize Venceremos College in Redwood City, Calif. He has long been an organizer of opposition to the war in Vietnam.

Antonio Mondragon - Bay Area representative of Reis Tijerina's Alianza Movement in New Mexico. He is the director of El Centro de la Raza at California State College, Hayward.

Antonio Camejo - Formerly an instructor in the Chicano Studies program at Merritt College in Oakland, Calif. He is the candidate of the Socialist Workers Party for Superintendent of Public Instruction in California.

Froben Lozada - Chairman of the Latin American Studies Department at Merritt College. He is the SWP candidate for attorney general of California.

Isabel Hernandez - Member of the Chicano Student Union at Chabot College, Hayward, Calif.

Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales - Chairman of the Denver Crusade for Justice.

Armando Valdez: We're going to get into a dialogue now on what Corky [Gonzales] proposed last night, that is, on the formation of a Chicano political party and on sending delegates to a national conference in early spring. For those of you who were not here last night, there was some question raised about the Democratic Party, and whether we would support Cesar Chavez if he ran for office in the Democratic Party or in any traditional party in the existing system.

The first brother said that if Chavez ran for governor of California in an independent political party, in opposition to the existing Republican and Democratic parties, that he would be in full support of Chavez.

When I spoke, I had an ideological difference with that. I said that if we did not have either the time or the expertise within a given time limit to develop an independent Chicano political party, that my support as a Chicano would go to Chavez, knowing that the racists in this state would never support him and knowing that he would be a formidable opposition to the type of platform that Alioto [mayor of San Francisco] and Unruh [main contender for Democratic Party gubernatorial nomination] have for us, and that if in fact there were no third party, and Chavez chose to run within the Democratic structure, that this would at least give political attention to the Chicanos.

This is my position at this time. I still feel that we need a separate, independent party that will be the voice of the Chicano people, without the supposed Chicanos like those who are [Gov.] Reagan's aides, or the type of guys that are just *tio-tacoing* all around and claiming to represent us. We need independence. And the same thing goes in the formation of a Chicano college. The same thing is inherent in self-determination for all nations and all people. But, my position is that Chavez running would be at least enough of an opposition to focus attention on the Chicano movement and give us a polit-

ical platform from which to speak.

Antonio Camejo: In my opinion, the most important, in fact, the key task of revolutionaries in the United States today is to break the political monopoly that the ruling class has on politics in this country. For over 70 years the ruling class in this country has operated the Democratic and Republican parties uninterruptedly and without opposition. And during these 70 years, every time an election came up there would be people who would say, "Now is not the time to break away. I agree with you that we should have our own party, but now is not the time. We must continue to support one of the two main parties; if we don't the worst one of the two—the greater evil—will get elected."

If you look back over history, this has been the traditional argument. But the most important thing that can be done in this country, the most important thing that *La Raza* can do, is to organize itself independently politically from the Democratic and Republican parties.

Now, let me comment on what it would mean if Chavez ran as a Democrat. It would mean that he would be saying to Chicanos and *La Raza* community that we should look to the Democratic Party to solve our problems, that we can win changes through supporting the Democratic Party, that we can make changes this way and get our freedom.

What is the Democratic Party? It is a political instrument of the people who own and control this country, the people who are fighting the war in Vietnam, the people who make profits by oppressing us, by the super-exploitation of our people. That is what the Democratic Party is. To run in the Democratic Party means that you are going to tell people to register in the Democratic Party and to vote in the primaries, it means that you are going to orient people toward supporting that party.

Once you start telling people that it's OK to support the party because you're running in it, there's a logic to that. They're going to start saying, "Well, what about this other liberal who says the same things you say? What about Jesse Unruh, because he's not eating grapes this month, shall we support him? How about Alioto if he comes out

with a few liberal statements in the campaign, shall we support him? How about Cranston [U.S. Senator from California] who is a big supporter of the grape strike, should we support him? He's a Democrat like you, Chavez."

You see, it's not just a matter of supporting *La Raza*, it's not just a matter of Chavez being part of *La Raza* and we should support him, but what direction is he pointing in for our people to follow? Is it a correct direction that is going to win results and advance the revolution? Or is he pointing us in a direction that is going to lead us into the same dead end that people have been struggling to get out of for the last 70 years?

Aaron Manganilla: It's very difficult for me to comment on Tony's analysis because I don't think that we are carrying on a debate. And I am in wholehearted support and agreement with everything he says. And I imagine you are wondering, "Then why are you talking at all?" The point is that I think now the only difference between us is a point of priorities, that is, that in fact there has not been enough of a voice for the Chicano people; and I guess that what I'm saying is that we need mass media, publicity. And that can be highly criticized, and I can sense it even as I speak of it. But we need some type of voice to be heard.

I'm not saying that it's not the right time to change, God sakes it's way past time! That's not my argument. Mine was just a differentiation of political priorities and revolutionary priorities.

I already have a difference with Chavez but, you see, it is very difficult to go up to *La Raza* and say, "John Kennedy, Bob Kennedy and Ted Kennedy are all pigs,"—and that's what they were and still are. At the same time they're shaking hands with Chavez and saying "boycott grapes," these were the same guys that were getting McNamara into the Defense Department, and that were getting more and more grapes sent to Vietnam. I understand that they were pigs, that they were the ones that started that process that has continued through the Democratic and Republican parties.

My whole emphasis is that we need a

political voice at this point. And Cesar Chavez seems to be in that position. It is a question of priorities; we need that voice even if it means supporting Chavez in the Democratic Party. We want the masses of people to begin to understand that we're supporting him as a voice of the Chicano and not giving credence or righteousness to any type of solidarity or unity with the Democrats.

Roger Alvarado: I think it is important for us to understand that when we are talking about a political party, what we are talking about is having real political power, having real authority to direct our lives in the way that we want to. I think that for us to talk about having the same kinds of things the Anglos have in this country is bullshit. I think for us to talk about being Democrats or Republicans or relating to the electoral system the way it is now, is nothing but a waste of our people's time.

I think that if we are going to talk about change, then we are going to have to talk about revolutionary change, a total change in our society, a total change in this economy, a total change in the political structure, a total change so that people have direct participation in those institutions that control their lives, and not just a few people of a privileged minority.

We are going to have to relate to the fact that we are going to have to develop our own organization, our own principles for that organization. And if we need mass contact, if we need publications, if we need contact through television, through radio, then it falls upon the people to develop that type of communication.

We can't go to NBC, we can't go to ABC, we can't go to CBS, we can't go to any one of these lying dogs and ask them to let us use their machinery so that we can tell our people that this system is no good. Those people make their money off this system. Those people have those kinds of machines because they live within the context of the capitalist system which exploits us. We cannot go to our exploiters and ask them to let us use their machines so that we can tell the rest of our broth-

ers and sisters that the machines are exploiting us, because they are in the hands of the exploiters. It's ridiculous to talk in this kind of a context.

We have to realize that our needs as a people can only be resolved by us, because only we understand what the needs are, because we are the ones that have them. And if we are going to deal with those needs, then we must organize our own political structure, we must organize our own means for attaining power, and we must be prepared at all times to defend that organization with whatever is necessary. We can no longer wait, and talk in terms of things like the Republican and Democratic parties, we have to talk in terms of where we are now and what the reality of a political party for our people is at this point. If we can't relate to a political party as a people, then we need to relate to some other kind of organization.

We have to quit bullshitting each other and quit playing the Man's verbal games and realize that any time that we relate to each other as organizations or as individuals we are talking about brothers' and sisters' lives. They are taking our brothers to Vietnam and they are raping our sisters in the streets. They are murdering us wherever they want to. And we aren't doing anything about it. If it's a party that will stop them, then it's a party that we need. If it's some other kind of organization that's going to stop them, then that's what we need. Not some kind of verbal dialogue that doesn't have anything to do with anybody anywhere.

Isabel Hernandez: I agree with Mr. Alvarado. It's great to talk about being revolutionary, you know. It's great for college students who are aware of what's going on, who know we've been exploited. But we have to think in terms of people in the *barrio* and tell them "you've been exploited" in terms they can understand, not in terms of big words, big theories, but in terms of they are paying three times as much as somebody else in the supermarket, in terms of their kids not getting a decent education, in terms of them getting decent jobs.

How do you do this? One of the

problems is that a lot of Chicano people are not citizens. This presents the problem of whether it is worth it to become a citizen and work within the system, or to find an alternative. In terms of voting, traditionally the Chicano, the Latin people, have been very suspicious of politics because they have always been sold out.

The next point is that it's going to take a lot of work if you're going to make a political party. We're going to raise the people, inform the people, inform ourselves, so we can be effective. We're going to show the Anglos, we're going to show everybody, that we have to move on. We have to stop the exploitation, we have to have personal contact with the people in the *barrio*, not sitting up in the colleges and rapping and theorizing, talking about revolution, but we also have to go to the *barrio* and tell people where it's at.

Antonio Mondragon: I would like to present this in the form of a question, a rhetorical question if you want. We are looking at reality, we have been seeing where the injustice in this country, which has been hidden from the eyes of the people, really lies. But, there is another point. It seems to me, that if we started a political party according to the view of the socialist as spoken, we might alienate many of the people from the Crusade for Justice, the *Alianza*, the *Huelga* people, because, how many socialist Chicanos are there now in the Bay Area? Socialist with a capital S?

Antonio Camejo: My conception of an independent Chicano political party is not that it has to be socialist or have a socialist program. It probably will develop a socialist program as the revolution approaches, but this will not be the case at the beginning. Socialists *will*, of course, be in the forefront of building the Chicano party, because this would represent a major break with the system and would be a giant step forward for the people. We would be active members of a Chicano party, and I, for example, would be proud to run as a candidate of such a party. But, there would also be large numbers of people in the party who have not yet been convinced of socialism, and who will only become convinced as a result of the struggle.

Do you want me to develop that? OK. Let me deal with some of these problems involved in building a party. First of all, an independent Chicano political party would not just run in elections. I think Roger Alvarado makes an extremely important point about elections. We cannot get into the bag of the Peace and Freedom Party which just brought a whole bunch of liberals and radicals together for the purpose of running in an election. The Peace and Freedom Party was an electoral coalition, nothing else. The day after the election, it fell apart. You never heard anything from them after that. And you're probably going to begin to hear from them again, because another election is coming up. They end up doing nothing except miseducating the people about what is really needed. I would be opposed to this type of formation.

An independent Chicano political party would not just take part in elections, but it would also have to engage itself in the day-to-day struggle of our people. It would have to be a party which would lead such things as campus struggles, that could participate in helping to form the Chicano studies departments around the entire Southwest and the entire country wherever *La Raza* happens to be. It would be a political party that would participate in mass demonstrations over different issues in the community, in the schools, for housing, against the war. It would be the type of organization, for example, that would do the kind of things that the Crusade for Justice has been doing. It would do this as well as participate in electoral activity.

The point I am making about the Democratic and Republican parties is the following: that in my opinion it is a principle, a revolutionary principle, and in the tradition of Emiliano Zapata, you know, who said, "I will die a slave to principles, never to men," that you do not support those people who are oppressing you. Principles are important, and if you have incorrect principles, you cannot make a revolution.

It's a principle that you do not support those people who are oppressing you. That's a principle in my opinion. I refuse to support in any way the people who are responsible for my oppression. Now, in terms of elections, how-

ever, it would be incorrect for us to take the attitude that since we know that the electoral system in this country is a farce, since we know that the Republican and Democratic parties play a con game, since we know that you cannot make a revolution through elections, since we know that we are not going to take power in this country through elections, that therefore we don't participate in them. That would be a mistake.

The history of the revolutions throughout the world have shown that it is a tactical question whether you participate in elections, and how you participate in them. Lenin, for instance, in the Bolshevik Party, which made the first socialist revolution in the world, participated in elections. Fidel Castro ran in elections. The point is this, that even though we understand the whole question about electoral politics, the community does not. The majority of *La Raza* does not know the role that the Democratic Party plays, therefore it is our task to be able to reach them on this.

Elections are a tactic that can be used by revolutionaries to be able to reach the people, and to be able to organize the people. For instance, by running in elections you can get on television. It's incorrect to say that they won't let you on. An example of this is Paul Boutelle, who is a revolutionary Black nationalist and a socialist, who got on a half hour of national network time on the Joey Bishop show, where he got up there and rapped about how rotten this system is, how decadent it is, and why we have to have a socialist revolution.

How was he able to do this? Because there is a law which says you have to give candidates who are running for office equal time on radio and TV, and Paul Boutelle was running on the Socialist Workers Party ticket. Sure they try to take this time away from us. They try to maneuver in every way they can. But, we fought back against them, we were right up there with our lawyers, and said, "Nothing doing, you've got Nixon up there, you've got Humphrey up there, we're going to talk for a half hour too." And they had to give it to us. We fought for it legally and we won that.

Now, we're going to do the same

thing in the state of California with the election campaign coming up. We're running as revolutionary socialists in this campaign to reach thousands of people with our ideas and educate them about the needs of the people in this state. We are also running our campaign as an example of the type of thing that can be done if Brown people organize their own party. And we will be campaigning in favor of building a Chicano party. And if an independent Chicano party were formed in this state, we would be supporting it and building it. There is a tremendous potential for building such a party. We can do it. We can go in and talk to our people. We can win them over.

Let me say something about what we can do. It's true we are a minority, but the Democratic Party in the state of California can only win if the Chicanos vote for it. Think of that. We have the potential to wipe it off the face of the map as a political institution. And on a national scale, in alliance with Black people, we have the power to make it impossible for the Democratic Party to win another election in this country. Just think of what this means. We have the power to turn the political structure in this country upside down and inside out.

Now, what does that mean? Does that mean that the Republican Party would always run the country, and that we then would be worse off? The Democratic Party wins an election because it is supported by a coalition of the labor movement, Brown and Black people, and other Third World people, Native Americans, Asian Americans.

The labor movement, which includes white racist workers—and they are racist—support the Democratic Party for two reasons: 1) they think the Democratic Party can produce on their demands and 2) they think the Democratic Party can win. However, if it can be proved that the Democratic Party cannot win another election, they would have to rethink their whole strategy. This is especially significant in terms of the radicalization in this country, where the Democratic Party is being exposed as the party of the Vietnam war, and where more and more people are beginning to see more clearly that the Demo-

cratic Party is not fulfilling their needs.

And, you know, the American workers have been indoctrinated for 30 years that the Republican Party is their arch enemy. And it would be difficult for the ruling class in this country to turn around and say, "Now you've got to support the Republicans." The whole question of who the workers should support would be much more open to question and discussion. And those people within the labor movement who believe the workers should organize a labor party in their own interest, independent of the Republicans and Democrats, would get a much better hearing.

The point is that the formation of a Chicano party could help to change the whole political relationship of forces, and could help set an example for other people who want to fight oppression, for Black people, for people in the labor movement who are for organizing an independent political power.

At the same time we would be driving wedges into the majority population, breaking them up. You know how the ruling class maintains their position, how they divide and rule. Well, in a revolutionary struggle the smartest thing to do is to take your enemy and break him up, drive wedges into him, break off sections of the majority, and win alliances for yourself, and then your minority becomes larger and larger until it is no longer a minority but through alliances becomes a majority. That's the tactic that we can use in terms of building a political party.

If we don't take this step, if we don't use our political power, we will never get anything but crumbs. We will be guaranteed tokenism, and we will lose struggle after struggle. And let me end on Chavez. It's true that he would be able to talk to a lot of people, and tell the truth about the grape strike and tell about the oppression of *La Raza*. It's true that he would be able to do those things. But, that's not the key thing. He would be doing a disservice to the entire movement in this country because he would be miseducating people about the crying need to break with the Democratic Party. He would be miseducating people, and it's a lot harder to educate people after they've been miseducated about what is necessary.

It's like driving a stick shift for 30 years, and then trying to switch to an automatic. You end up having an accident because you keep pushing the clutch down, and there's no clutch there. That type of miseducation makes it harder to eventually form an independent Chicano party. It would make it harder for us to talk about a Chicano party if Chavez was at the same time campaigning and registering people in the Democratic Party. And the truth of the matter is that this has already been tried again and again and nothing has come from it.

Malcolm X made a very strong statement on this. He said, "Anyone who supports the Democratic Party after its record of oppression, and what it has done to our people, is not only a fool, but a traitor to his race."

Froben Lozada: Concerning brother Roger's view of the Peace and Freedom Party, [Earlier in the evening Roger Alvarado had raised the issue of not wanting an organization similar to the Peace and Freedom Party because of its failure.] I will have to disagree with him on that, because to me, that's not a political party. I mean you don't have a serious political party when you have so much disagreement within that party that they could not even decide who their vice-presidential candidate would be, much less carry out any effective actions.

Another thing is that there are many activities and actions which help lead to the revolution, which help to organize people independent of the ruling class, but which are not revolutionary in themselves, and which involve many people who are not yet consciously revolutionary.

An example of this was the San Francisco State strike which Roger Alvarado helped to lead. To me, the strike was not the same thing as a revolution, but it was a step in the process of struggle, it was a tool through which people became politically educated in the process of struggle. Through actions such as these you organize people to fight for the needs of the community, and you raise the level of consciousness of the people. The same thing goes for a political party. It can also be used as a tool.

Corky Gonzales: I reserved getting involved in some of the sensitive issues here. There are so many things that go through my mind, I know I can't make a short statement and really answer the questions raised, for example, the questions raised by the young ladies who took their positions up here. [At the beginning of the session a demand was made to have women be represented on the panel and two women, including Isabel Hernandez, were seated.] I've many thoughts on that line as I mentioned here last night, and I might mention a few of them here again today.

We understand and realize after having been involved in many kinds of movements, what the strength of a woman is, and what her strength is to the movement. We also recognize, watching many of our college students here, one of the things that the young lady said at the end of the table, that we can intellectualize and we can rap, but that we must also get down to the grass roots. Which comes to the use of the tools which Froben mentioned here, which comes to the question of how do we start this political party?

Before I get into that though, I want to get back to the women's situation, not to get into an argument, because I don't want one unless we have an hour and a half or two hours. I want to say only this: That one of the problems that I see, as one of the grass roots people that came out of the *barrios*, as someone who worked in the fields, is that I recognize too much of an influence of white European thinking in the discussion. I hope that our Chicana sisters can understand that they can be front runners in the revolution, they can be in the leadership of any social movement, but I pray to God that they do not lose their *Chicanisma* or their womanhood and become a frigid *gringa*. So I'm for equality, but still want to see some sex in our women.

So I want to rap. I want to tell you about some of the things we feel. I think that Tony Camejo hit on some very important points that we should analyze. I mentioned last night that we have to stop falling in the same old traps, stop being affected by the same commercial stuff that the majority of this idiotic society is believing — like the

fact that if you used enough *Hai-Karate* you would have so many women after you that you would have to walk over a mattress of women to get the one you want. You know this is the type of thing that brainwashes the whole community. So we have to understand that all these false ideas they have put before us are illusions. That these false ideas are the same ones they have always used to control. The symbol of Anglo superiority has got to be destroyed. And the burden of Chicano inferiority has got to be destroyed. So, in doing these things, we want to control and develop our own leadership, and to politicize people — not just make politicians — but to make people aware and teach them. This has got to come through actions, not words. We understand that.

I don't want to get involved in discussing personality. But, because I'm very nationalistic, I'm very glad to hear Tony Camejo say that if we had a Chicano party, he would be willing to run as a Chicano in the Chicano party. I'm very proud of that and very thankful that he said that, realizing that his expertise and his professionalism, his brains, can be utilized within the Chicano community to help create that liberation that's important. Not to be dominated by white society that has set up every type of political party that exists today.

You know we had communalism and socialism hundreds of years before the white man ever hit these shores. And so did many of the other countries that were occupied but not "discovered" until the *gringo* got there with a cross and a gun.

Now we want to talk about how we are going to create action in the people. What are the common denominators that unite the people? The key common denominator is nationalism. When I talk about nationalism, some people run around in their intellectual bags, and they say this is reverse racism. The reverse of a racist is a humanitarian. I specifically mentioned what I felt nationalism was. Nationalism becomes *la familia*. Nationalism comes first out of the family, then into tribalism, and then into the alliances that are necessary to lift the burden of all suppressed humanity.

Now, if you try to climb up a stairway, you have to start with the first step. You can't jump from the bottom of this floor to the top of those bleachers. If you can, then you must be "super-macho." (I don't talk about super-man.) But, you can't, so you start using those tools that are necessary to get from the bottom to the top. One of these tools is nationalism. You realize that if Chavez, or any popular figure in the Mexican scene decides to run, and if he ran for any party, as popular as he is, then out of nationalism we would even vote for an idiot. If his name was Sanchez, if his name was Gonzalez, you would walk in and vote for him, whether you know him or not, because you are nationalistic. And we have elected too many idiots in the past out of nationalism, right?

Now, let's take that common denominator, that same organizing tool of nationalism, and utilize it to work against the system. Let's use it to work against the two parties that I say are like an animal with two heads eating out of the same trough, that sits on the same boards of directors of the banks and corporations, that shares in the same industries that make dollars and profits off wars. To fight this thing, you look for the tools.

Now, if Tony is a socialist, if my brother here is an independent, if my sister is a Republican—she might hit me later—if one of the others is a Democrat and one is a communist, and one from the Socialist Labor Party, what do we have in common politically? Nothing. We've been fighting over parties across the kitchen table, wives are Republicans and husbands are Democrats, sometimes, and we argue over a bunch of garbage. And the same Republicans and Democrats are having cocktails together at the same bar and playing golf together and kissing each other behind the scenes.

So you tell me then, what is the common denominator that will touch the *barrio*, the *campos* and the *ranchitos*? Are we going to go down there with some tremendous words of intellectualism which they cannot relate to, when they relate on the level of, "We need food. We need health care for our children. I need someone to go down to

juvenile court with my son. There is no job for my husband." And the revolution of 15 or 20 years from now is not going to feed a hungry child today.

So what is the common denominator we use? It is nationalism. If someone wants to turn around and say, "That's a cultural bag," I tell them to go to hell. Because I know one thing—in our group we have dropped all the parliamentary procedure bullshit, we dropped all the *gringo* type of government, and we have a *concilio de la familia*. And a seven-year-old boy can get up and make his ideas heard and can influence a change that everyone else agrees with.

A woman who influences her old man only under the covers or when they are talking over the table, and then he goes in—if it's a bad idea—and argues for that, because he's strong enough to carry it through, is doing a disservice to *La Causa*. Any woman can influence a man whether she is weak or strong. So it's better for her to bring it out in the *concilio* and then all of us can take it and evaluate it as to whether it's right or wrong, good or bad.

All right, how do we start this? We start it and call it an independent Chicano political organization. We can use it as Tony mentioned also, under the FCC code, we can use it as a forum to preach and teach. We can gain the same amount of radio and TV time as any phony candidate. We proved it in Colorado. I ran for mayor as an independent, and I campaigned two weeks. Two weeks, because we were busy directing a play and busy in civil rights actions. But, we had the same amount of time on TV as anybody else, and on radio. We were able to start to politicize people. We were able to start to tell about an idea. We were able, even, to sue the mayor and the top candidates for violating the city charter, for spending more money than the city provided for under its constitution. We had that mayor and the most powerful Republicans and Democrats sitting on their asses down in the courtroom. Our method was to take them to court, to take them to task, to show the public that they were corrupt. And we proved that they were liars, over and over again.

We must start off by creating the structure—the *concilio*—by calling a congress sometime this spring, bringing together all those people that believe that it can be done. We understand that when we organize in an area where we are a majority, we can control. Where we are a minority, we will be a pressure group. And we will be a threat.

We understand the need to take action in the educational system. We understand that we need actions such as the "blow-outs," because the youth are not afraid of anything. Because the youth are ready to move. The whole party will be based on the actions of the young, and the support of the old.

Secondly, in the communities where we are a majority, we can then control and start to reassess taxes, to start charging the exploiters for what they have made off our people in the past. You can also incorporate, the community to drive out the exploiters, to make them pay the freight for coming into the community, and sign your own franchises. You can de-annex a community as easily as they annex a *barrio* and incorporate it. You can create your own security groups, and place a gun here to protect the people, not to harass them, but to protect them from the Man who is going to come in from the outside. You can also create your own economic base by starting to understand that we can share instead of cut each others' throats.

Now what are the tools? We said nationalism, which means that we have to be able to identify with our past, and understand our past, in order that we can dedicate ourselves to the future, dedicate ourselves to change. And we have to understand what humanism really is. We can tie the cultural thing into it, but we also have to tie in the political and the economic. We tie these things together, and we start to use the common denominator of nationalism.

Now for those Anglo supporters, don't get up-tight. For the Black brothers, they are practicing the same thing right now. And we understand it and respect it. And we are for meaningful coalitions with organized groups.

We have to start to consider ourselves as a nation. We can create a congress or a *concilio*. We can understand that we are a nation of *Aztlán*. We can understand and identify with Puerto Rican liberation. We understand and identify with Black liberation. We can understand and identify with white liberation from this oppressing system once we organize around ourselves.

Where they have incorporated themselves to keep us from moving into their neighborhoods, we can also incorporate ourselves to keep them from controlling our neighborhoods. We have to also understand economic revolution, of driving the exploiter out. We have to understand political change. And we have to understand principle. And the man who says we can do it within the system—who says, "Honest, you can, look at me, I have a \$20,000-a-year job"—he's the man who was last year's militant and this year's OEO employee [Office of Economic Opportunity]. And now he's keeping his mouth shut and he ain't marching any more. We have to understand that he is not a revolutionary, that he's a counter-revolutionary. He's not an ally, he becomes an enemy because he's contaminated.

You can't walk into a house full of disease with a bottle full of mercuriochrome and cure the disease without getting sick yourself. That's what we say about the lesser of the two evils. If four grains of arsenic kill you, and eight grains of arsenic kill you, which is the lesser of two evils? You're dead either way.

We have to understand that liberation comes from self-determination, and to start to use the tools of nationalism to win over our *barrio* brothers, to win over the brothers who are still believing that *machismo* means getting a gun and going to kill a communist in Vietnam because they've been jived about the fact that they will be accepted as long as they go get themselves killed for the *gringo* captain; who still think that welfare is giving them something and don't understand that the one who is administering the welfare is the one that's on welfare, because, about 90 percent of the welfare goes into admin-

istration; and who still do not understand that the war on poverty is against the poor, to keep them from reacting.

We have to win these brothers over, and we have to do it by action. Whether it be around police brutality, the educational system, whether it be against oppression of any kind—you create an action, you create a blow-out, and you see how fast those kids get politicized. Watch how fast they learn the need to start to take over our own communities. And watch how fast they learn to identify with ourselves, and to understand that we need to create a nation.

We can create a thought, an idea, and we can create our own economy. You don't hear of any "yellow power" running around anywhere. Because they base their power around their church, their house, their community. They sell Coca Cola, but their profits go to their own people, you see, so that they have an economic base. We are strangers in our own church. We have got *gachupin* [traditional term of contempt for Spaniards who ruled Mexico for 400 years] priests from Spain in our communities, telling us *vamos a hechar unos quattros pesos en la canasta* [let's throw four pesos in the collection dish]. And then he tells you, "I'm your religious leader," and he tries to tell you how to eat, where to go,

who to sleep with and how to do it right—while he's copping everything else out. You know, we're tired of this kind of leadership.

You have to understand that we can take over the institutions within our community. We have to create the community of the Chicano here in order to have any type of power. As much as the young ladies have created power in their own community. But they have to share it with the rest of us. They have to be able to bring it together. And we are glad when they sit down instead of retreating. It means that we're all one people. It means that we're all one *Raza* and that we will work together and we will walk out of here in a positive fashion.

And then you have to think positive. Don't think it can't be done. If you think negative you won't get across the street. You think positive, because it only takes a minority to begin to win over and move a majority. It only took Pancho Villa and seven men to cross El Rio Bravo and end up with a hundred thousand men in Mexico City. It only took Castro 82 men, and they killed all but 15, and 15 men took a nation. It only takes an idea and a philosophy to carry it through, and if the philosophy is written with the blood of martyrs, it cannot be erased, and we can become a free people. Thank you.

Why Chicano Studies?

by Froben Lozada

On Nov. 13 and 14, 1969, a Chicano symposium was held at California State College, Hayward. Froben Lozada, chairman of the Latin American Studies Department at Merritt College, Oakland, and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for attorney general in California, was one of the speakers. In his talk, he outlined the nature of the special studies department at Merritt which is completely controlled by the students themselves. The following is an abbreviated transcript of his speech.

* * *

I have been asked to speak on the relevancy of the Chicano Studies De-

partment at Merritt College to the Chicano movement, to point out how Chicano Studies relates to the Chicano movement.

As a rule I'd look at universities, including Cal. State Hayward, as nothing but brothels where people sell their minds instead of their bodies. (applause) For example, we know the complicity of University of California at Berkeley which is only one of the many universities that do intensive research for wars, armaments, defoliants and everything of that sort. They also do intensive research for the growers, for the benefit of the growers, such as inventing a new grape-picking machine.

They do absolutely nothing, however, for the farm workers. They don't want to and they won't do it.

At the Merritt College Chicano Studies Department we have a different situation. There the staff of 12 part-time instructors and two full-time instructors is chosen and recommended by the students. Not only that, the courses offered are also determined by the students. We make good use of the campus, holding conferences, producing leaflets, establishing a national communications network, getting lecture fees for people who are involved in the Chicano movement so they can come and talk to our classes.

Out of the 12 members of the staff, three of them were busted during the Third World Liberation strike at Berkeley last winter. Two of them are present here tonight: Bernardo Garcia-Pandavenes and Antonio Camejo.

In making the courses relevant to Chicanos we have made a very serious effort to let them know what the nature of the ruling class of this country is. Some 30,000 persons dictate foreign and domestic policy to the puppets in Washington, Sacramento and elsewhere.

If you need confirmation of this all you have to do is pick up *Who Rules America?* written by Professor Domhoff, or pick up *The Rich and the Super Rich* by Ferdinand Lundberg and you will get an idea of how the ruling class works.

How can this .016 percent of the total population run the country? They have several tricks. One of them is racism. Divide and rule is the name of the game. They will divide Blacks against Mexicans against poor whites. The ruling class also divides the Mexicans against the Mexicans and the Blacks against the Blacks and the greater the division the greater power they can hold.

That's the only way they can retain control of the power since they constitute only .016 percent of the population. They can come into Oakland and bring in a million dollars of pie from the Office of Economic Opportunity and set it down there for the Blacks and Mexicans to fight it out. And when there was no enmity and animosity between the two *before*, after the million dollars are brought in by OEO, the Mexicans

will end up fighting the Blacks saying, "We should get \$300,000." And the Blacks will say "We should get \$800,000." Instead of fighting the man who brought the pie in they'll end up fighting against each other. A very subtle trick. (applause)

Instead of fighting the man to get \$2,000,000 they end up fighting to get crumbs, the million dollars that was brought in. And this is what the ruling class wants.

They're also very sneaky in diverting struggles that might arise. For instance, if the Mexicans in South Texas or Southern California or anywhere in the Southwest are inclined to fight against the war, to oppose the Vietnam intervention, the rulers can very subtly come in and divert the struggle into trying to get more Mexicans on the draft boards—which does absolutely nothing to change the intervention that's going on in Vietnam.

They get all these liberal Mexicans fighting and shadowboxing with Frito Bandito [a racist Mexican caricature in a TV ad for Fritos]. They claim to be radical and they claim to be very courageous, because they are struggling and fighting against Frito Bandito, because it's an offensive advertisement, but in the meantime, they fail to examine the causes of racism and the roots of racism which is strictly a product of the system.

Another trick that the ruling class uses is to always make the victim look like a criminal. The Indians rose up to resist and struggle against being enslaved—they were bent on making the Indians slaves too. The minute the Indians fought against being put in chains like the Black brothers, the minute they rose up against it, they were called savages! And this trick is used time and time again.

If the Blacks rise up to fight against the racism they face, they are quickly labeled "violent." The ruling class very subtly turns the tables on people.

Zapata, Pancho Villa are made to look, in our eyes, as if they were criminals, and they keep pulling that trick on us. It's brought up to date. They make Che Guevara look like a crim-

inal, a bandito, the same thing they did to Zapata.

They don't restrict it to individuals, they make even nations look like criminals, when indeed they are the victims. Cuba, a little country of 8 to 10 million people, was made to look like it was about to take over the United States. (applause) Simply because they decided to have missiles *on their own land!*

The people in Washington and elsewhere point the finger of accusation and say, "Fidel is trying to export revolution." In the meantime, this country continues to export *counterrevolution*. So they turn the tables on everything in order to continue to deceive the people.

They will say, "The Communists want to use you; the Socialists want to use you; they want to use the Third World people." But these are the people who are using us! They talk about the "free world," when half of Latin America is under military dictatorship, and they call those countries part of the "free world." But they truly don't give a damn who runs them, as long as they satisfy the needs of the people in Washington.

What we're trying to do is to tell the students at Merritt College that we should be sick and tired of these liberals coming in from Washington and Sacramento, coming over and embracing our leaders like Cesar Chavez and slobbering all over him and kissing him and saying, "I'm going to quit eating grapes today." (applause) Then they get on the United Airlines plane—which is the same airline that kept that Black sister from working because she was wearing a natural—they get back on that plane and start munching on grapes. They go back to Washington and defend the very same system whose Defense Department has made Vietnam the third greatest grape-consuming country in the world! (applause)

But it is nothing new. If you look back to Woodrow Wilson, he didn't want any Blacks in the White House. And another man with a magic name in liberal Democratic circles came up and opposed a federal anti-lynch law; that man's name was Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Then we have another figure, who

said that "Asian wars should be fought by Asian boys"—another liberal. This liberal also said that the intervention in Cuba was a mistake—but it was no mistake. He only admitted that it was a mistake after it failed. (applause) Not only that, but this liberal Democrat is the same one who originated the green berets, and the same one who established counterinsurgency forces to go oppress brothers in the Third World, in Latin America—and that was John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

Then came another liberal Democrat with his scare tactics, trying to scare the people into voting for the lesser of the two evils. See, we're not supposed to question, we're not supposed to ask, "Why the hell do I have to choose an evil?" (applause) We're not supposed to say that evil is evil and there are no degrees to it.

Anyway, this liberal scared us into choosing him as a lesser evil over Goldwater. That was L. B. J.

After he gets out of the picture, another liberal Democrat comes running up who, when there were 249,999 GIs in Vietnam, thought the war was perfectly moral. The minute there were 250,000 GIs in Vietnam, all of a sudden, overnight, the war became immoral. That was Mr. Eugene McCarthy. (applause)

And we are supposed to look up to these scums with respect for their morals. And they have the guts to tell *us* to be nonviolent! (applause) And the pacifists want *us* to preach morality to them!

Another example came up recently, when this liberal Democrat swam across the lake without even getting wet—that was the Mary Kopechne case—with Ted Kennedy. And we're supposed to preach morality to these guys!

Our students at Merritt College know that the only difference that exists between the liberal Democrats and the conservative Republicans is that the liberals can deceive the people better.

Now—very briefly—on the staff and how we evaluate teachers who are to teach courses in our department. We had a lady who came up to us and said that she had formerly been a member of the Fair Play for Cuba Com-

mittee. I said, "You're hired." (applause) And then we asked her what her major was, and we found a course she could teach and now she's teaching United States relations with Mexico and Latin America from the point of view of the oppressed, which means the left-wing point of view. (applause)

And Ysidro Macias, who is now in Santa Rita [framed-up on charges that came out of the Third World strike at Berkeley last winter], set up the course in Mexican-American political thought, which includes the study of the Denver Crusade for Justice and the Delano farm workers' strike and Reis Tijerina and everything else. And we invite people from those movements who are actively involved to come over and lecture to our classes.

We have a course in music by Bernardo Garcia-Pandavenes, who is another of those bused during the Third World strike. But it's not restricted to music, because music has its protest songs and stories. And so it's all tied in.

In the literature courses, we look at it from the standpoint that this is Northern Mexico, and we select the best novels coming out of Mexico and the few that are beginning to come out here, novels by Carlos Fuentes and Jose Revueltas. Carlos Fuentes was banned from Puerto Rico by this system. They didn't want him to go into Puerto Rico because he's a left-winger—and yet they preach freedom of speech. Jose Revueltas is now in prison in Mexico City, accused of leading the demonstration where 500 students were slaughtered [Oct. 2, 1968].

We let the students know why there must be unemployment under this system—because it's profitable. Everything has to do with money. As long as you keep a large number of people unemployed, you can always say, "If you don't want to work for \$2.40 an hour, don't worry because some Black or Mexican will." It's very profitable and keeps the wages down.

We point out the nature of wars and the causes of wars. We point out the fact that Chicanos have to die in out-

rageous numbers in Vietnam, and not only do they have to give up their lives, but before they die they have to eat six pounds of grapes. (applause) So these guys are not satisfied with injury, they have to add insult to injury. This course on economic development of the Third World also will be presenting the point of view of the oppressed. This is very important to the students.

Each and every one of the students at Merritt College will be taking part in the antiwar march [Nov. 15] where Corky [Gonzalez] will be one of the speakers, along with Dolores Huerta, because we're tired of being in the front lines in Vietnam. The front lines that we should be in are the front lines of the antiwar demonstrations. (applause) We look at the barrio differently too, not as something confined by arbitrary city limits determined by corrupt politicians who want you to think in no broader terms than your own barrio, so that you won't bother to think of the people of the Third World as brothers. We look at our barrio as one not restricted or confined to arbitrary city limits. Our barrio goes beyond these fictitious city limits and extends into the Plaza de los Tres Culturas in Mexico City. Our barrio is projected into the favelas in Brazil. Our barrio extends into the jungles of Bolivia and the jungles of Vietnam. And that's what our barrio is! Our barrio, in fact, is the whole world, wherever the oppressed might be.

We furnish speakers everywhere. Tomorrow, most of the members of our staff will fan out to take part in the premarch demonstrations [Nov. 14], and our students will also be with us, so that we, the Merritt College Chicanos, go out to let the people know that *we remember the Alamo*, for the right reasons. (applause) And that we have to create two, three, four, many Alamos! (cheers and applause) And to those Birchers and sons of Birchers (laughter) who go around saying, "America: love it or leave it," to them we say, "America: change it or lose it!" (cheers, applause)

Further Reading

Other books on the Chicano movement which can be ordered from
finder Press:

North from Mexico/Carey McWilliams

La Raza: Forgotten Americans/Julian Samora

Delano: The Story of the California Grape Strike/John G. Dunne

On Latin America:

Insurgent Mexico/John Reed

The Underdogs (Mexican Revolution)/Mariano Azuela

Zapata: The Ideology of a Peasant Revolutionary/Robert P. Millon

Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America/Andre
Gunder Frank

Hugo Blanco Must Not Die/Andre Gunder Frank

Guatemala: Occupied Country/Eduardo Galeano (cloth)

The Great Fear in Latin America/John Gerassi

Latin American Radicalism: Left and Nationalist

Movements/Irving Horowitz, Josue de Castro, John Gerassi (eds.)

Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo
Revolution/C.L.R. James

Puerto Rico: Freedom and Power in the Caribbean/Gordon K.
Lewis

Mexico '68: The Students Speak/ U.S. Committee for Justice to
Latin American Political Prisoners

Latin America: Reform or Revolution/James Petras, Maurice
Zeitlin (eds.)

Land or Death: Hugo Blanco and the Peasant Struggle in Peru/
Frances Starr

Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle
in Latin America/Regis Debray

The Youth Movement and the Alienation of Society/José Revueltas

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